BATTLEFIELD ACTION
12¢
MAY

Battlefield Action

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I KNEW THE RISK I WAS RUNNING WHEN I MADE THIS JUMP! BUT I HAD TO TRY... IT WAS OUR ONLY CHANCE TO GET FATHER DONOVAN OUT OF THE COMMUNISTS' HANDS!

"JUNGLE JUMP!"

WHEN I HIT, I ROLLED...RIGHT INTO THE BRUSH...AND I SLAMMED A FRESH CLIP INTO THE M.G.! THE VIET-CONG WERE COMING...AND I WAS READY!

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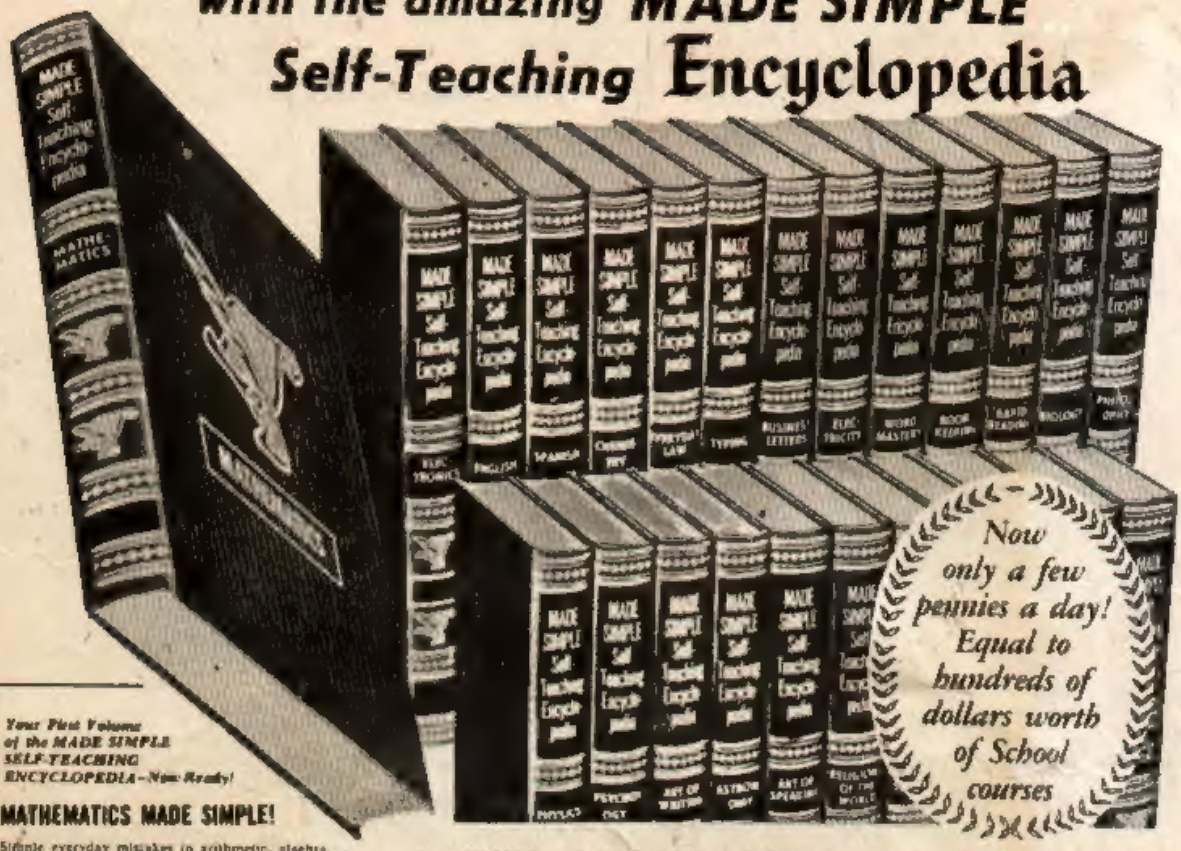

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BACK-DOOR BARNES

KOREA...FALL OF '51/ OUR SIDE WAS HAVING A BAD DAY/ CAPTAIN HART'S PLATOON WAS PINNED TO ITS TRENCHES BY CEASELESS, HEAVY MACHINE GUN FIRE/ ADVANCE OR RETREAT WOULD HAVE MEANT SUDDEN, ZINGING DEATH/

A-2278

CAP'N, I DON'T FEEL LIKE KILLIN' THE WHOLE DAY WAITIN' FOR THEM TO MAKE A MOVE/ SO HOW ABOUT ME AND A COUPL'A THE BOYS STEPPIN' OUT FOR A VISIT/

WE COULD TRY FOR THAT COVER/ THEN COME AROUND BEHIND THEM AND NAIL THAT CHOPPER/
TOO DANGEROUS/ YOU WOULDN'T GET TWO INCHES/

I'D SURE LIKE TO GO FOR A WALK, CAP'N/ GETTIN' KINDA CRAMPED IN HERE/
OKAY, BARNES/ IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, IT'S YOU/

OUR LAST SMOKE GRENADE/ CAN'T REACH ENEMY WITH IT/ BUT IT'LL MAKE SOME COVER FOR YOU/ WATCH OUT FOR THE BLAST/

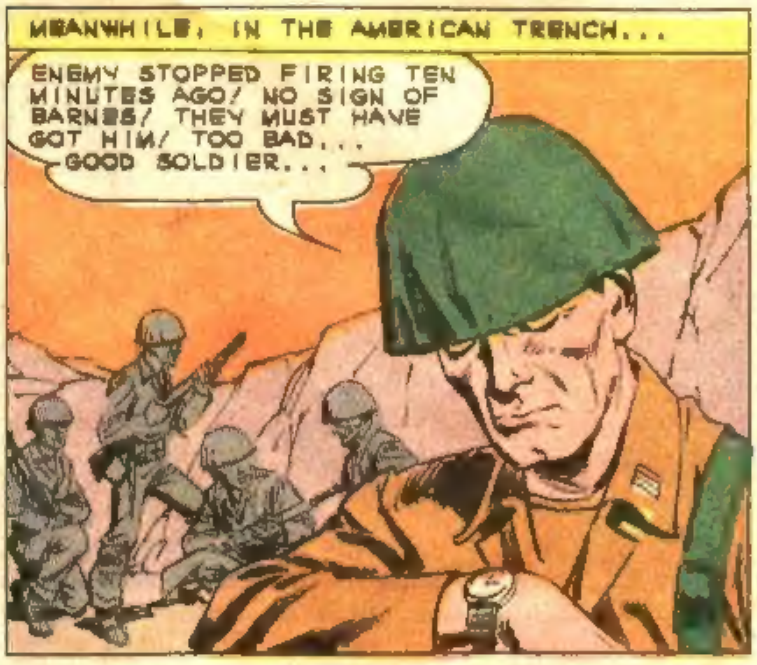
THE GRENADE GAVE OFF ENOUGH SMOKE AND COVER TO HELP SGT. BARNES AND HIS MEN GET A JUMP ON THE ENEMY FIRE!
LET'S HOOF IT, BOYS!
WHEW! JUST IN TIME! NOW LET'S SEE ABOUT THEM NOISY NEIGHBORS!
HE'S GONNA' BE WATCHIN' FOR US! HE KNOWS WE'RE OUT HERE NOW!
BARNES WAS RIGHT! THE REDS HAD RIFLES POSTED, GUARDING AGAINST A SIDE ATTACK FROM THE THREE MEN ON THE LOOSE!
GOTTA MAKE 'EM FORGET US FOR A BIT! OKAY BOYS! EVERYBODY PICK UP A ROCK!

CONTINUED AFTER FOLLOWING PAGE

THAT DID IT/ LET'S GO/
BARNES AND HIS MEN STAGED THEIR FANTASTIC ATTACK AND THE ENEMY WAS TAKEN COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE/
SURPRISE/ SURPRISE/
ATTENTION/ PEOPLE'S MACHINE GUN POSITION 3/ WE ARE SENDING GROUND TROOPS TO AID YOU/
THAT'S PROBABLY THIS SPOT/ WELL, LET'S GET THIS CHOPPER TURNED AROUND SO WE CAN GREET OUR COMRADES/

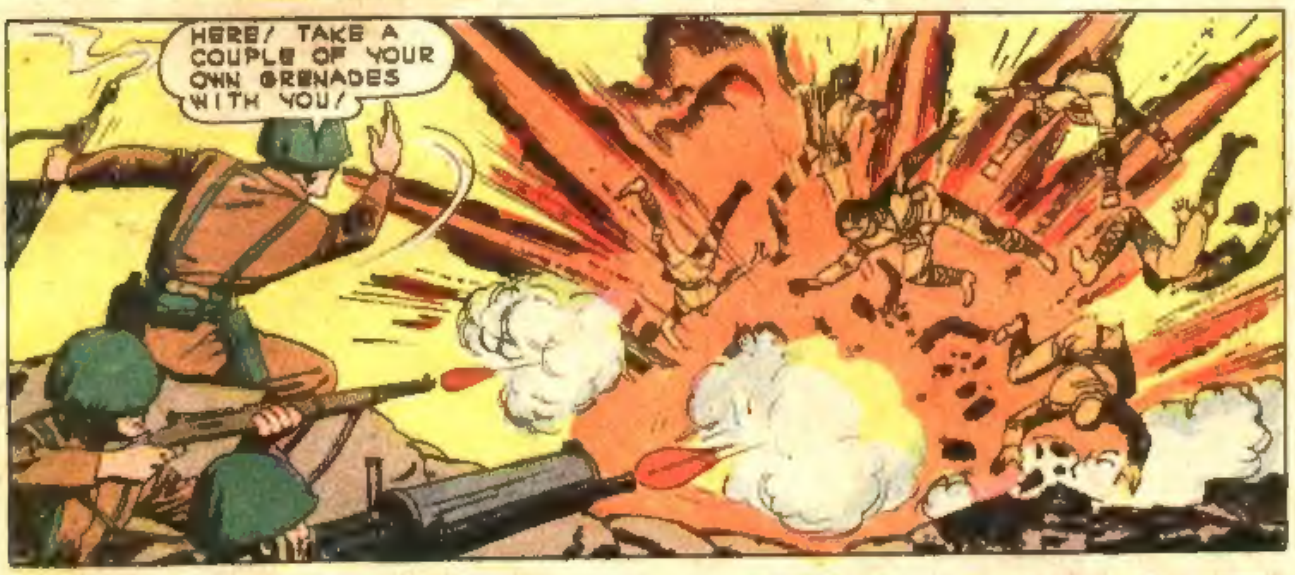
THAT IS OUR MACHINE GUN PLACEMENT/ ALL IS QUIET/ ENEMY MUST HAVE BEEN WIPED OUT/

DON'T FIRE 'TIL YOU CAN SMELL 'EM/


MEANWHILE, IN THE AMERICAN TRENCH...
ENEMY STOPPED FIRING TEN MINUTES AGO/ NO SIGN OF BARNES/ THEY MUST HAVE GOT HIM/ TOO BAD... GOOD SOLDIER...

CAPTAIN/ MORE TROUBLE/ ENEMY GROUND TROOPS JOINING ENEMY GUN POSITION/
NO WONDER THEY'VE BEEN QUIET/ JUST WAITING FOR HELP/ WELL, WE CAN EXPECT THE WORST NOW/

CHARLTON COMICS GIVE YOU MORE!



BARNES, FROM NOW ON I THINK ALL RED MACHINE GUNS SHOULD BE MANNED BY AMERICAN TROOPS/ ITS MORE FRIENDLY THAT WAY/
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO, SIR/
END

MOUNTAIN MENACE

A LITTLE-KNOWN, BUT HEAVY-EMBATTLED PACIFIC ISLAND DURING WWII/ CHARLIE COMPANY, IN SORE NEED OF MORE AMMUNITION AND SUPPLIES, IS CONFRONTED BY A JAP MACHINE GUN WHICH HAS A 360 DEGREE FIELD OF FIRE FROM ITS HILLTOP POSITION...

TAKKA TAKKA TAKKA

WELL, TEX, LOOKS LIKE YOUR ROPE TRICKS WON'T HELP US OUT OF THIS MESS/

LOOKS LIKE... WE SHOR IS IN A HEAP A' TROUBLE/

WHEN TEX MASON JOINED CHARLIE COMPANY, THE UNIT'S MORALE WENT UP CONSIDERABLY...

HI, PELLAS/ MIND IF I JOIN YA?

HEY, YOU GUYS, LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A RODEO/

I KINDA GOT SEPARATED FROM MY GROUP/ SO I THOUGHT I'D MOSEY IN HERE AND JOIN YOUR LITTLE POSSE/

WELCOME ABOARD, TEX/ WHAT'S WITH THE ROPE? EXPECT TO DO SOME CALF-ROPING?

OH, I JUST LIKE TO KEEP IN PRACTICE/ YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN IT'LL COME IN HANDY...
OUT HERE WE USE A RIFLE/
RIFLE IS OKAY/ BUT YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU MIGHT CATCH WITH A GOOD LASSO/
NICE GOING, TEX/ MAYBE WE WILL RUN INTO A HERD OF SOMETHING...
CASE'S WORDS WERE NOT IDLE CHATTER...
HIT IT, MEN/ SNIPERS/
ZZ/NNK
PING
GOT HIM/ ONE SNIPER TO GO/ BUT WHERE'S TEX?
RAPTA!
BUT TEX HAD HIS OWN STRATEGY...
JUST A MITE CLOSER..
HEY, BOYS/ I CAUGHT ME A POLECAT//
RIDE 'EM, COWBOY/
2

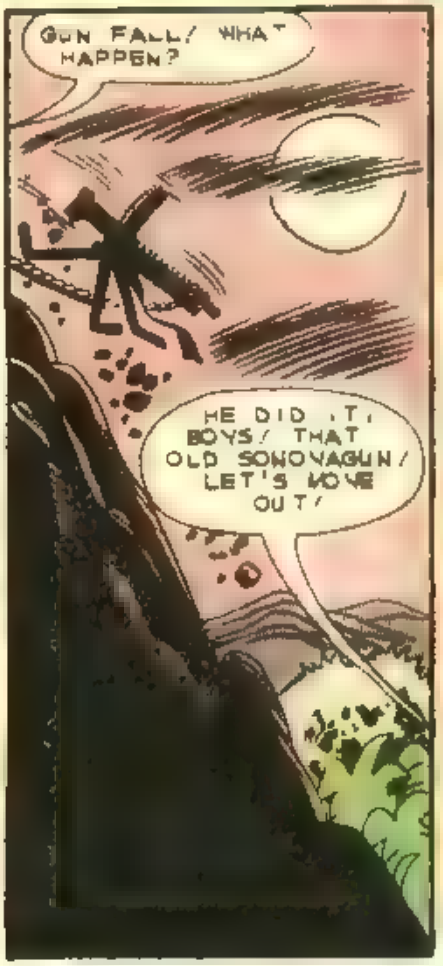
WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON SUPPLIES AND AMMUNITION/ OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO REJOIN OUR UNIT, WHICH I FIGURE IS SOMEWHERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THESE HILLS ..
THE MEN PUSHED ON, FACING POSSIBLE AMBUSH EVERY STEP OF THE WAY...
DON'T SHOOT UNLESS YOU HAVE TO/ WE DON'T WANT THE WHOLE JAP ARMY TO KNOW WE'RE HERE...
LET'S HOPE THEY FEEL THE SAME WAY/
I'D LOVE TO PICK HIM OFF, BUT I DON'T WANT TO RAISE A RUCKUS/
MAYBE I CAN HELP OUT/ GET READY...
TEX, I'M GOING TO TALK TO THE COLONEL ABOUT US ALL USING ROPES/ THEY DON'T RE[illegible] AMMO, AND THEY'RE MUCH QUIETER THAN A RIFLE/
THE HILLS I TOLD YOU ABOUT/ JUST BEYOND THEM SHOULD BE SAFE GOING/
THAT'S MIGHTY GOOD NEWS/ LET'S MAKE IT/
MORE TROUBLE/ B G TROUBLE/ WHERE'S THAT MACHINE GUN LOCATED?
SEEMS LIKE IT'S COMIN' AT US FROM ABOVE/
PING
PING PYEEEEE
PING
PING
PING

TOP OF THE HILL/ THE JAPS HAVE A COMPLETE CIRCULAR FIELD OF FIRE/ LOOKS LIKE YOUR ROPE TRICKS WON'T HELP US OUT OF THIS MESS/
DOES LOOK BAD, CASEY..
MKA TAKKA
SWOOSH
ZZUUMM

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN IT GETS DARK/ IF I CAN JUST GET A CRACK OF MOONLIGHT/
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, TEX BUT I'LL BET IT'S NOT VERY SANE..

I'D RATHER BE BACK ON THE RANGE RIGHT NOW/ BUT I MIGHT NEVER GET THERE IF I DON'T BRING THIS OFF.

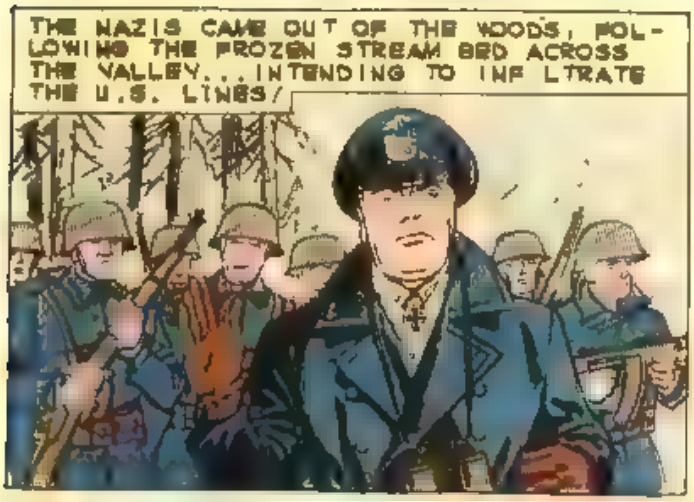
JUST ENOUGH MOONLIGHT... TOUGH POSITION TO WORK FROM, BUT I GOTTA MAKE IT...

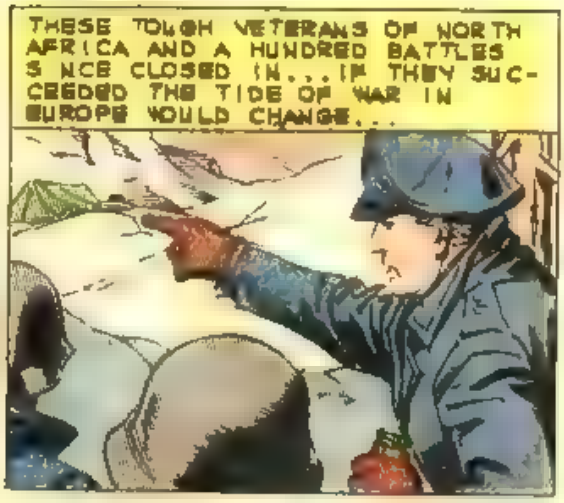

GUN FALL/ WHAT HAPPEN?
HE DID IT, BOYS/ THAT OLD SONOVAGUN/ LET'S MOVE OUT/

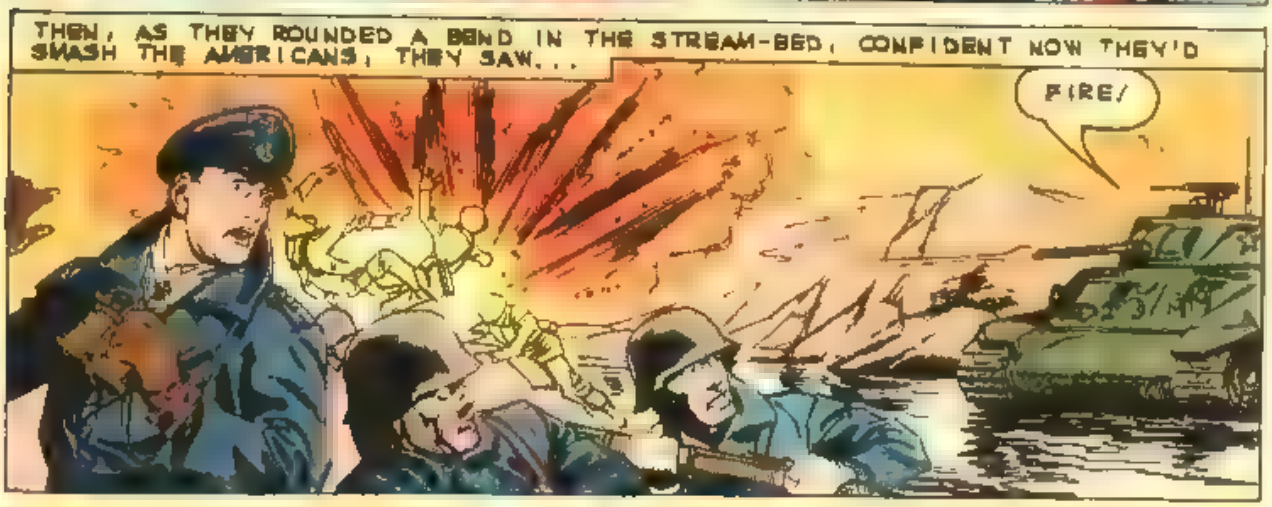
THE NEXT DAY, CASE AND HIS MEN REJOINED THEIR UNIT...
OKAY SOLDIER/ GET RID OF THAT ROPE/ YOU'RE OUT OF UNIFORM/
SIR, I SUGGEST WE ALL CARRY ROPES FROM NOW ON/ YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW HANDY THEY CAN BE/
END

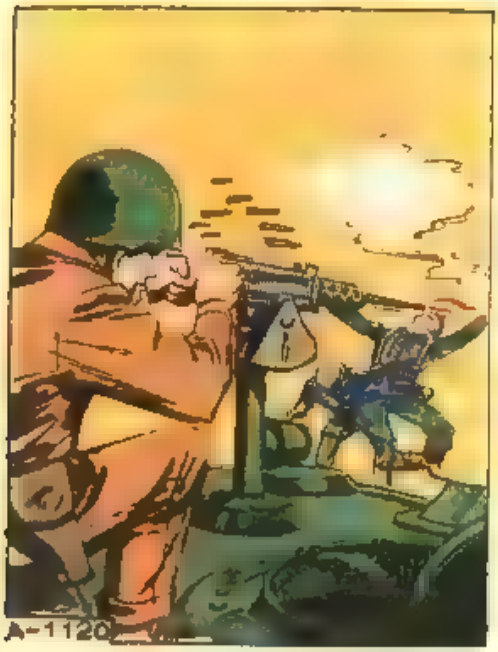
BATTLEFIELD ACTION

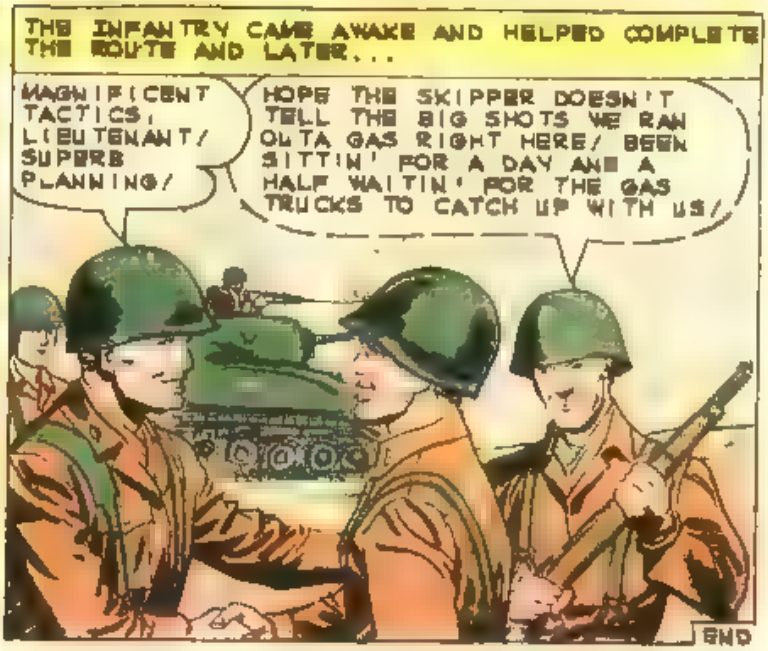
SET-UP




THESE TOUGH VETERANS OF NORTH AFRICA AND A HUNDRED BATTLES SINCE CLOSED IN...IF THEY SUCCEEDED THE TIDE OF WAR IN EUROPE WOULD CHANGE...






THE INFANTRY CAME AWAKE AND HELPED COMPLETE THE ROUTE AND LATER...
MAGNIFICENT TACTICS, LIEUTENANT/ SUPERB PLANNING/
HOPE THE SKIPPER DOESN'T TELL THE BIG SHOTS WE RAN OUTA GAS RIGHT HERE/ BEEN SITTIN' FOR A DAY AND A HALF WAITIN' FOR THE GAS TRUCKS TO CATCH UP WITH US/
END

THE P.O.W. MASTER

IT WAS APR L AND THE YEAR WAS 1945 .ADOLF H TLER S VAUNTED 1000 YEAR RE CH WAS CRUMBL NG. . .AND NOW LIVES HAD TO BE SAVED THE MURDERERS OF THE NAZI PARTY CAUGHT AND TRIED, AND ONE NAME WAS H GH ON THE L.ST OF WAR CRIMINALS. . .S.S COLONEL JOSEF KULMBACH, COMMANDER OF STALAG 14, THE HELL-HOLE WHERE THOUSANDS OF AMER CANS AND ALL ED TROOPS HAD D ED OF STARVATION AND DISEASE TO BE BURIED IN UNMARKED P TS/ NOW, RETRIBUTION WAS AT HAND. . .THE SKELETONS WHO WERE MERE CAR CATURES OF L VING MEN STARED DUMBLY AS THE FAST-MOV NG U S INFANTRYMEN ATTACKED THE DES- PERATE S.S. GUARDS WHO KNEW THE PUN SHMENT THEY DESERVED AND WOULD UN- DOUBTEDLY RECEIVE/

CHARLTON COMICS GIVE YOU MORE!

5 DAYS EARLIER, CAPTAIN LEO WINGATE GOT SPECIAL ORDERS...
STALAG 14 IS YOUR OBJECTIVE, CAPTAIN WINGATE! AVOID COMBAT IF YOU CAN AND GET TO THE P.O.W. CAMP AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE! -JOSEF KULMBACH MUST STAND TRIAL FOR WHAT HE'S DONE TO OUR COMRADES!
I'LL GET THERE, GENERAL! SOME OF MY OUTFIT WENT INTO STALAG 14!
THIS IS A JOB YOU JOKERS OUGHT TO LIKE! OUR OBJECTIVE IS STALAG 14 WHERE CARMODY AND JIMENEZ WENT AFTER THEY WERE CAPTURED! CARMODY IS DEAD NOW...SO ARE THOUSANDS OF OTHER G.I.S, THANKS TO A MURDERING NAZ NAMED JOSEF KULMBACH!
THE TOUGH VETERANS MOVED ALONG THE ROAD TOWARD BERLIN... THE WEHRMACHT WERE DISORGANIZED, EACH MAN TRYING TO SAVE HIMSELF, AND WE HANDLED THE TROUBLE THEY GAVE US WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE!
GOT THE SNIPER LOCATED, JOYCE?
HE SHOWED HIMSELF A MINUTE AGO...HE'LL TRY AGAIN PRETTY QUICK AND THAT'LL BE ALL FOR HIM!
COME ON YOU GUYS! QUICKER WE GET TO STALAG 14, THE MORE PRISONERS WE'LL FIND ALIVE! JOYCE HAS THE SNIPER UP THERE!
ZING
WON'T BE LONG NOW, MEN -- THE NAZIS ARE THROUGH -- WE'LL BE BACK TO THE FRENCH COAST IN 6X6S, THE CAPTAIN SAID!
YEAH, AFTER WE CAPTURE THIS NAZ, MURDERER! MAN, I'D LIKE TO GET MY HANDS ON HIM! CARMODY WAS MY BEST BUDDY!
AT THE P.O.W. CAMP, SS COLONEL KULMBACH AWAITED HIS CERTAIN FATE!
YOU TOOK THE BOWS HERR COLONEL KULMBACH...NOW, STEEL YOURSELF TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT! PLEASE DO NOT BLUBBER, IT SICKENS ME!
YOU NAZIS POISONED OUR FATHERLAND! IT IS SCUM LIKE YOU WHO DESTROYED DER FUHRER'S DREAM!
2

YOU . YOU CANNOT LEAVE NOW! IT IS AS MUCH YOUR . .
YOU SAW MY ORDERS FROM BERLIN COLONEL! IT IS YOUR DUTY TO ASSIGN A CAR AND DRIVER AND YOU WILL NOT D SOBEY!

BUT IT WAS LATER THAN THE ODD AND EVIL LITTLE MAN BELIEVED! HE STEPPED OUTSIDE TOWARD THE WAITING CAR...JUST AS THE CRACKLE OF GUNFIRE, THE LETHAL GROWL OF A THOMPSON AND THE KRUMP-KRUMP OF AMERICAN GRENADES MADE HIM GO PALE!
YOU HEAR THAT! WE HAVE LITTLE TIME...LET'S GET STARTED!

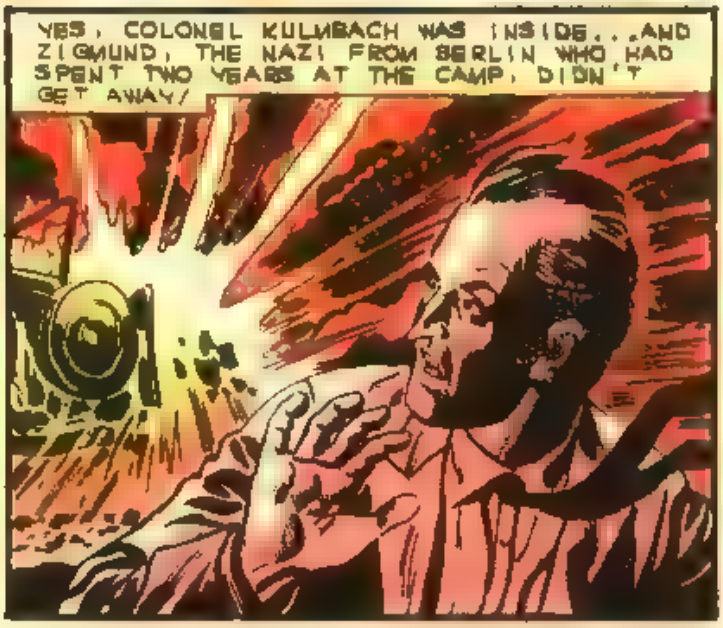
THEY ARE AT THE GATES, HERR ZIGMUND! I ENVIED YOU NAZIS BEFORE BUT I AM GLAD NOW THAT I WAS ONLY A SOLDIER! WE WILL FARE BETTER HERR ZIGMUND, DON'T YOU AGREE?

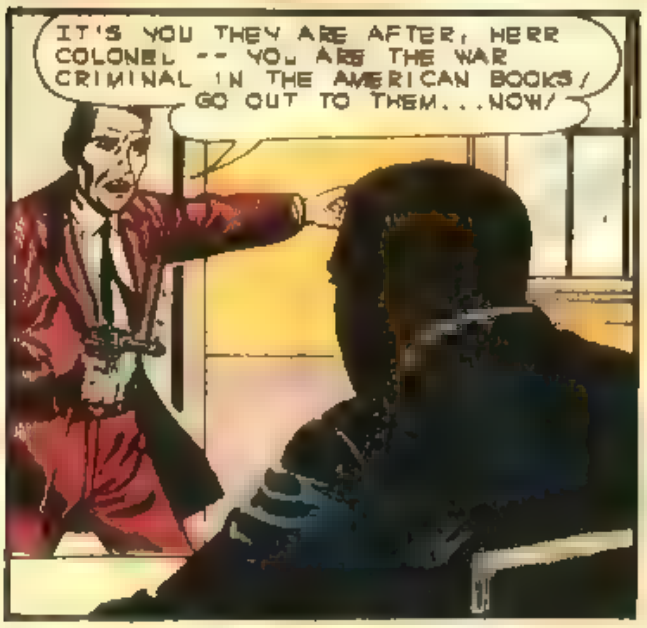
THE SS MACHINE GUNNERS IN THE TOWERS...SYMBOLS OF NAZI POWER, CRUELTY, AND THEIR HOPELESS PLIGHT FOR SO LONG TO SO MANY PRISONERS IN THE COMPOUND BELOW...THEY WERE THE FIRST TARGET!
RATATAT

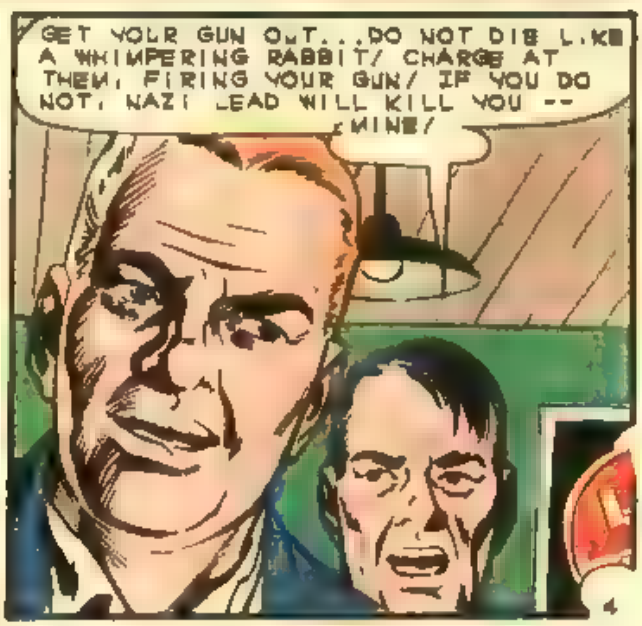
BLAST A PATH THROUGH THE WIRE... AND BE CAREFUL, IT'S ELECTRIFIED!
WHAM
WHAM

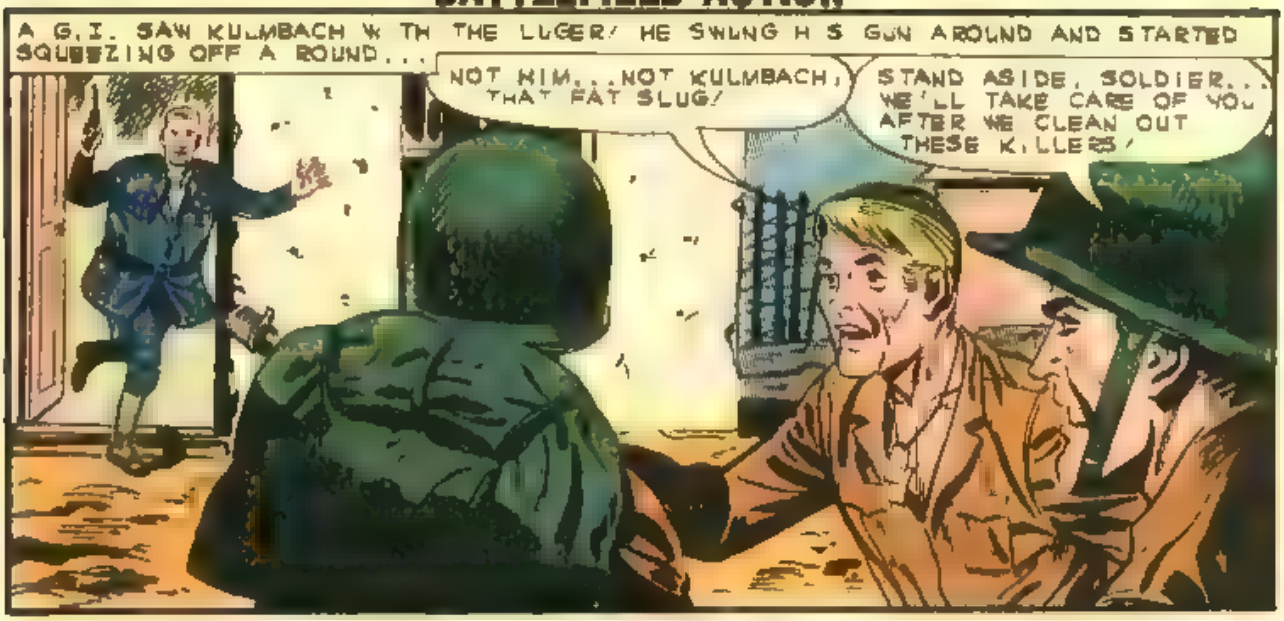
GRENADES OPENED THE FENCE... AND THE INFANTRYMEN, ACCUSTOMED TO BATTLE WITH HITLER'S COMPETENT FIELD SOLDIERS, HAD NO TROUBLE GOING THROUGH/
WATCH YOUR FIRE...WE DON'T WANT TO HIT OUR GUYS INSIDE/

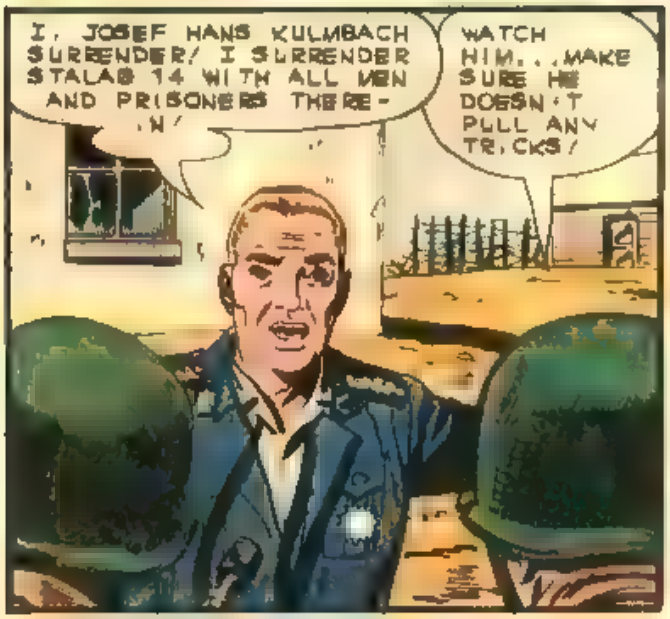
THEY'RE LOUSY SOLDIERS/ THEIR TALENT IS ABUSING UNARMED, HELPLESS MEN/ LISTEN, OUR MAN, KULMBACH, IS INSIDE THAT BUILDING/ KEEP AN EYE PEELED/

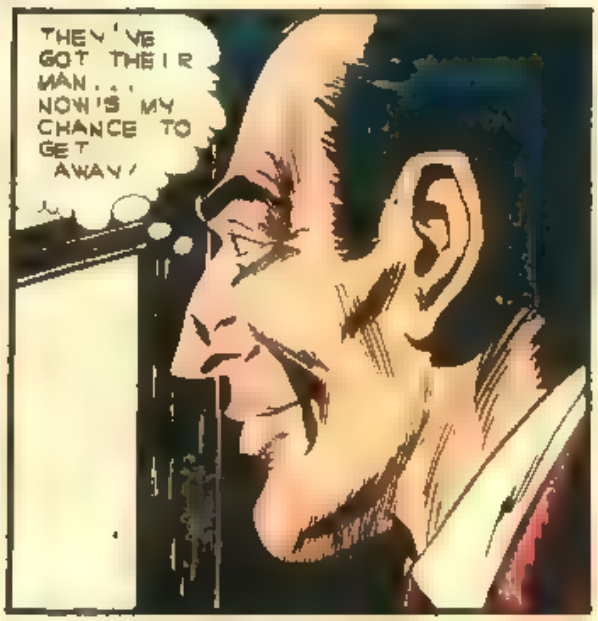

YES, COLONEL KULMBACH WAS INSIDE...AND ZIGMUND, THE NAZI FROM BERLIN WHO HAD SPENT TWO YEARS AT THE CAMP, DIDN'T GET AWAY/

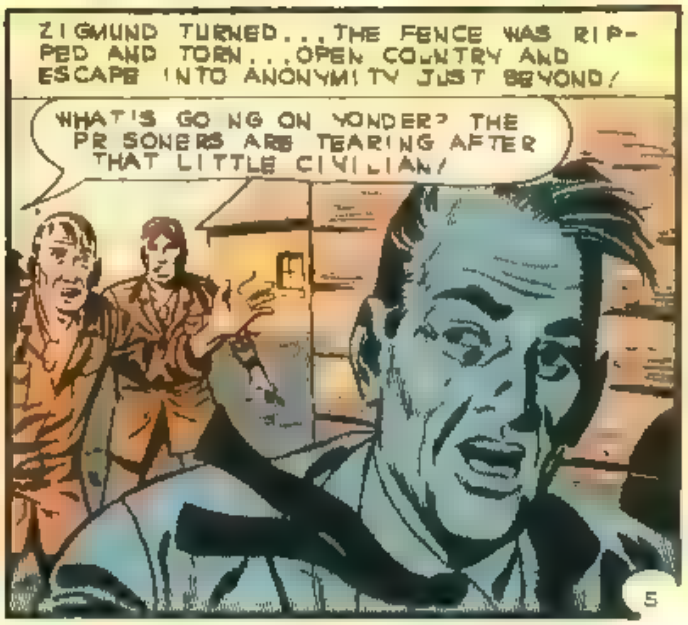

IT'S YOU THEY ARE AFTER, HERR COLONEL -- YOU ARE THE WAR CRIMINAL IN THE AMERICAN BOOKS/ GO OUT TO THEM...NOW/


GET YOUR GUN OUT...DO NOT DIE LIKE A WHIMPERING RABBIT/ CHARGE AT THEM, FIRING YOUR GUN/ IF YOU DO NOT, NAZI LEAD WILL KILL YOU -- MINE/


A G.I. SAW KULMBACH W TH THE LUGER/ HE SWUNG H S GUN AROUND AND STARTED SQUEEZING OFF A ROUND...
NOT HIM...NOT KULMBACH, THAT FAT SLUG/
STAND ASIDE, SOLDIER... WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU AFTER WE CLEAN OUT THESE K.LLERS/


I, JOSEF HANS KULMBACH SURRENDER/ I SURRENDER STALAG 14 WITH ALL MEN AND PRISONERS THERE-IN/
WATCH HIM...MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T PULL ANY TRICKS/


THEY'VE GOT THEIR MAN... NOW'S MY CHANCE TO GET AWAY/


ZIGMUND TURNED...THE FENCE WAS RIPPED AND TORN...OPEN COUNTRY AND ESCAPE INTO ANONYMITY JUST BEYOND/
WHAT'S GOING ON YONDER? THE PRISONERS ARE TEARING AFTER THAT LITTLE CIVILIAN/

CHARLTON COMICS GIVE YOU MORE!

WEAK AS THEY WERE THEY FOUND NEW ENERGY AND A MAN WITH A BODY THAT WAS A MASS OF BRUISES AND SCARS... LAUNCHED HIMSELF CATLIKE AT THE FRIGHTENED NAZI!
LET GO, LET GO
REMEMBER US, ZIGMUND? YOU'LL HAVE AS MANY SCARS AS WE HAVE BEFORE WE'RE THROUGH
THE INFANTRY CAPTAIN ARRIVED JUST IN TIME AS THE POW'S OF STALAG 14 GATHERED AROUND HITLER'S CIVILIAN EXPERT IN CRUELTY. THEY WERE STANDING QUIETLY DENSELY PACKED, AND THE CAPTAIN HAD TO RAM HIS WAY THROUGH!
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHO IS THIS MAN?
HE'S THE ONE WHO GAVE KULMBACH HIS ORDERS! HE CONDUCTED EXPERIMENTS IN PLANNED STARVATION, RAN EXHAUST ON TESTS ON US INJECTED US WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES TO TEST UNTRIED VACCINES... HE'S THE WAR CRIMINAL, NOT KULMBACH!
SO STALAG 14 BECAME ONLY A HIDEOUS MEMORY TO THE THOUSANDS WHO HAD SURVIVED ITS HORRORS! BUT ZIGMUND, THE NAZI DID NOT SURVIVE...AND AT LEAST ONE P.O.W. WAS PRESENT AT HIS FINISH!
END

THE INVENTION

Colonel John Burris, in charge of Twining Air Field, was standing at the large glass picture window that fronted the field It gave him a clear view of the planes that were landing or taking off. He turned around and then went to his desk. The large amount of paper work as well as the many detailed items for which he was responsible made him no longer a flying man. He pressed the signal button on his desk and Sergeant Bill Layer entered.

"Give this envelope to Major Davis at once,' he caid. "Then tell him I will have lunch with him at the regular time."

"The Major won't be back until about nine. That's what he told me to tell you," was the Sergeant's reply.

"What again?" smiled the Colonel

"Again," sighed the Sergeant. "I just can't figure it out. He's been to the circus fifteen times. Followed it to Centerville, Hampton and Riverhead. You of course understand that your daughter has been with him each time."

"She certainly must love him," admitted the Colonel, "To be willing to see the same show over and over again. But he has something in mind. When I asked him after he had attended five sessions, he just laughed and told me it was connected with official flying business."

"We get three of the new jets next week," said the Sergeant as he changed the topic. "I guess in a few years we won't have a propellor driven plane in the sky. When you fly faster than sound it seems to me we are going someplace. Just where, I don't know. But we are going to have a lot of problems connected with the factor of high speed."

"Don't worry too much about them yet," advised the Colonel. "We will solve them as they arise."

At that very moment, a charming young female of twenty-one was holding the right arm of a handsome officer of the Air Corps. He was feeding a baby elephant some peanuts.

"I think that TEENY really knows you," remarked Elen Burris to the man she was soon going to marry. "By this time I know exactly where we are going. To visit Coco the Clown."

They left the baby elephant who had had enough peanuts at least for the morning. Then they turned left and stopped in front of a parked trailer which bore a sign: "Coco The Clown. Known the World Over."

Major Davis knocked on the door and it was soon opened. A middle-aged man with his make-up welcomed the two of them into his trailer.

'I am going to try it this afternoon Mr Parsons who owns the circus has given his consent. If it works, it will be a big attraction. If it fails — maybe they will have to get another clown."

At noon, Elen and Major Davis ate at a quick lunch place on the circus grounds. When they had finished a loud speaking system began its message:

"Hurry folks! Go over to the south field. Something you have never seen before in your life. And free of charge! Coco the Clown is lazy. He is going to jump from an airplane seated in a chair. Watch this thrill of a lifetime."

Soon every person was on the edge of the south field. They watched an old plane taxi around the field and then go up into the air. It circled the field several times as it gained altitude. Then the loud speaker system con-

(Continued)

"Watch carefully folks! See Coco the Clown jump seated in a chair."

Suddenly an object was thrown out of the plane. A parachute opened and Coco the Clown glided down safely to earth seated in a chair. The parachute was attached to the chair.

"It works so far," said Major Davis. "But will it work in a jet?"

"So that's why you were so interested in helping Coco the Clown do this stunt," challenged a serious young female. "I knew you had something in that brain of yours. But why can't you just jump as usual from a jet?"

"You must clear the plane and a fraction of a second can be the difference between life and death," explained the Major. "The Pentagon knows about my idea. They have given me official permission to try it when I feel it has been perfected."

As though in terror and fright, Elen Burris clutched the arm of the man she loved. She knew what it was to be a test pilot. For her brother, Captain Howard Burris was doing that special work at Mitchell Field. She knew that she would die a thousand deaths every time the man she loved went up in a plane. But that was the price a woman had to pay when she married an Air Corps flying officer.

"You look so pale, I can read your very thoughts," whispered Major Davis to the woman he loved. "It has to be done and that is all to it."

"But can't somebody else try it first?" she wanted to know.

"Coco the Clown did that in a safe way," he retorted. "But I can't ask any other person to take the risk. This is in the line of duty."

They returned to the field at nightfall. Elen had a very solemn look on her face.

"What's wrong?" asked her father.

"Did you know that John was working on an idea of blasting out from a jet plane the pilot in a special seat attached to a parachute?"

There was no surprise on the face of Colonel John Burris. He just had a one word answer.

"Yes."

The three jets arrived at the air field and soon they were going through their paces in the air. Then one of the jets was taken into a special hangar that was under armed guard. Major Davis spoke to the pilot, Lieutenant Frank Hansely.

"We are going to make a few changes in this plane. Then the two of us go up in her. We'll be a bit crowded. I will tell you more about it later."

It took a full month to make the necessary changes on the plane. An automatic door had to be installed. Then the seat was rebuilt with a charge that could blast it out of the plane right through the door. A timer had to be installed so that the door would open as the charger was pushed down. Then the parachute had to be slightly redesigned.

Then came the test day. High Brass from Washington came to witness it. Lieutenant Frank Hansely was ready to pilot the experimental plane. Elen threw her arms around her beloved one and kissed him.

"There will be a prayer in my heart and on my lips every second until you land safely."

They all watched the take-off of the jet plane. Then it quickly gained altitude. Lieutenant Frank Hansely kept in radio contact constantly with the field.

"The count off is now starting," he told his listeners. "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one."

When he reached the fateful ONE, the automatic door opened and the chair was blasted right out of the plane. Breathlessly the onlookers watched the chair hurl down through space before the parachute opened. Then it glided slowly and safely to the ground.

"It works," shouted General Paul Sullivan with admiration in his voice. "We can save every pilot from a crippled jet."

Major Davis and his wife had a very happy honeymoon at the WINSTON HOTEL in Traymore Beach. Now they were driving south along highway 23. They stopped at a trailer park.

"We should find Coco the Clown here," said the Major. "I was shocked to read about the accident. Crosses a street and a boy on a bicycle runs into him."

The manager told them where the trailer was parked. They greeted the man who had been known for years as Coco the Clown but now used his regular name, Milton Welasco.

"Took us some time to find you," said the Major. "Is it true that your circus career is finished?"

"Yes," sighed the man sadly. "Unless somehow I find a large fortune to pay the medical billls that would be involved in a series of operations."

The Major took an envelope from his inner pocket and handed it to Coco the Clown.

"There's more than enough money here to take care of everything. You can even remain retired. I, as an officer, can take no financial reward for the invention. I explained in detail how I got the idea watching you tumble in a chair, and also how you helped me work on the idea. The money is from a special government fund to pay inventors. Take it. You earned it."

When they left a happy man, they also knew that his tears were real. For Milton Welasco would in a year again become Coco the Clown.

— THE END —

I KNEW THE RISK I WAS RUNNING WHEN I MADE THE UNAUTHORIZED JUMP INTO VIET-CONG TERRITORY...EVEN IF THE VIET-CONG GUERILLAS DIDN'T GET ME, THE ARMY WOULD COURT-MARTIAL ME WHEN I MADE IT BACK TO MY OUTFIT/ BUT I HAD TO TRY...IT LOOKED AS THOUGH I WAS THE ONLY GUY WHO GAVE A HOOT ABOUT GETTING FATHER DONOVAN AND DR. WEINSTEIN OUT OF THE COMMUNISTS' HANDS/
DID THAT NUTTY PARATROOPER FALL OUT THE OPEN HATCH?
HE JUMPED ON PURPOSE, SKIPPER/ HE'S GOT ENOUGH GRENADES AND AMMO TO FIGHT A WAR ALL BY HIMSELF... AND THAT'S JUST ABOUT WHAT HE'S GONNA HAVE TUH DO/
JUNGLE JUMP
THEY WERE PUMPING LEAD UP AT ME BUT I WAS SWINGING UNDER THE CHUTE AND ALL THEY DID WAS CUT A COUPLE SHROUD LINES/ I EMPTIED MY CLIP...SEEMS LIKE I HUNG THERE OVER THEIR HEADS A LONG TIME...THEN I FLIPPED A COUPLE GRENADES DOWN AT THEM/
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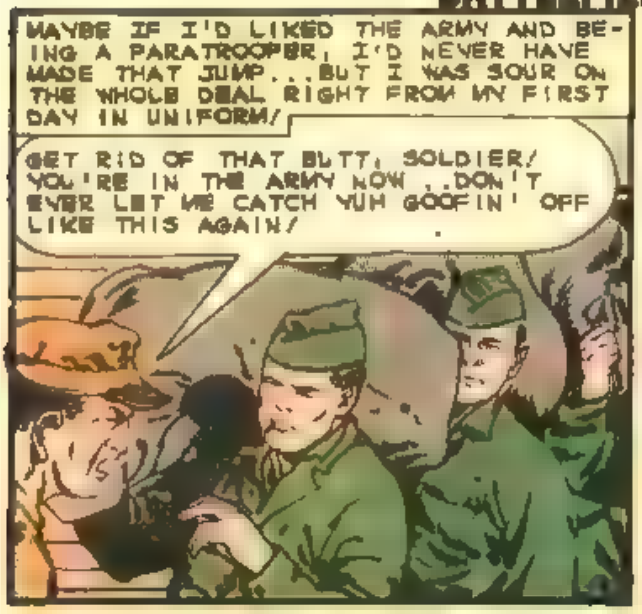
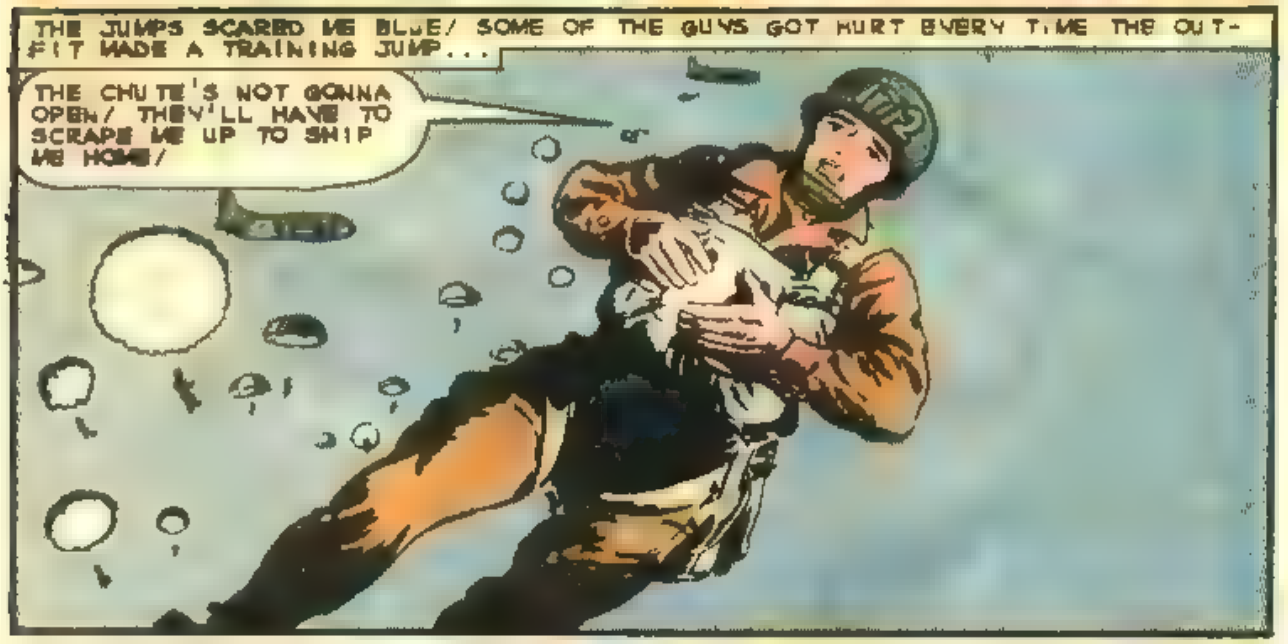
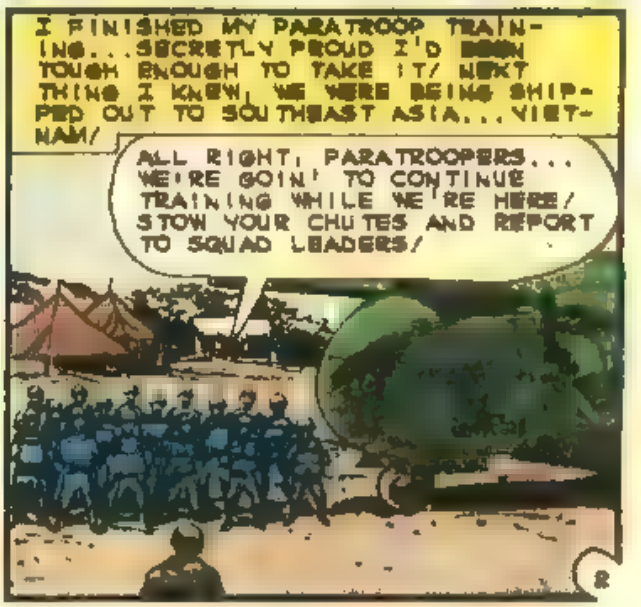

MAYBE IF I'D LIKED THE ARMY AND BEING A PARATROOPER, I'D NEVER HAVE MADE THAT JUMP...BUT I WAS SOUR ON THE WHOLE DEAL RIGHT FROM MY FIRST DAY IN UNIFORM/
GET RID OF THAT BUTT, SOLDIER/ YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW ..DON'T EVER LET ME CATCH YUH GOOFIN' OFF LIKE THIS AGAIN/

THE PARATROOP TRAINING WAS STUPID, I FIGURED/ THEY WORKED US SO HARD I'D FALL ASLEEP STANDING IN THE CHOW LINE/
BAXTER'S ASLEEP AGAIN/ HE GITS IN MO' TROUBLE SLEEPIN' THAN ANY G.I. IN THE OUTFIT/


THE JUMPS SCARED ME BLUE/ SOME OF THE GUYS GOT HURT EVERY TIME THE OUTFIT MADE A TRAINING JUMP...
THE CHUTE'S NOT GONNA OPEN/ THEY'LL HAVE TO SCRAPE ME UP TO SHIP ME HOME/

THIS IS THE LAST TIME/ THEY'RE NEVER GONNA MAKE ME JUMP AGAIN/


I FINISHED MY PARATROOP TRAINING...SECRETLY PROUD I'D BEEN TOUGH ENOUGH TO TAKE IT/ NEXT THING I KNEW, WE WERE BEING SHIPPED OUT TO SOUTHEAST ASIA...VIETNAM/
ALL RIGHT, PARATROOPERS... WE'RE GOIN' TO CONTINUE TRAINING WHILE WE'RE HERE/ STOW YOUR CHUTES AND REPORT TO SQUAD LEADERS/

I WAS MISERABLE/ I HATED THE TRAINING, THE DISCIPLINE, AND I WAS HOMESICK, I GUESS...
YOU RE BAXTER, AREN'T YOU? WHAT'S WRONG, GET A DEAR JOHN LETTER FROM HOME?
NO, SIR/ I JUST DON'T LIKE THIS OUTFIT OR THE COUNTRY/
THERE'S A NONDENOMINATIONAL EXPRESSION, BAXTER... THE DEVIL FINDS WORK FOR IDLE HANDS/ FOR IDLE MINDS TOO, NATURALLY/ HOW ABOUT GIVING ME A HAND OVER AT THE HOSPITAL?
THAT'S A SNEAKY WAY TO GET WORK OUT OF A GUY, FATHER DONOVAN... BUT I MAY AS WELL OR I'LL FLIP MY LID/
BOTH THE CHAPLAIN AND DR. WEINSTEIN WERE GOOD JOES....
I'VE GOT SOME MICKEY SPILLANE POCKET-BOOKS INSIDE FOR YOU, AL/ THAT'LL KILL SOME TIME FOR YOU/
YEAH, DOC, THANKS A LOT/
SO I DRILLED AND WORKED AND HUNG AROUND THE DISPENSARY HELPING THE DOCTOR, MAKING FRIENDS WITH FATHER DONOVAN...
YOU'RE NOT DOIN' SO BAD LATELY, BAXTER/ BETTER WATCH IT OR YOU'LL TURN INTO A THIRTY-YEAR CAREER MAN/
YEAH... GIMME MY RE-ENLISTMENT PAPERS, DAD, I'LL SIGN UP NOW/

WE WORKED WITH THE VIET-NAM AND FROM THEM I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THE VIET-CONG, THE COMMIES WHO MADE THEIR JUNGLE RAIDS FROM UP NORTH/ I EVEN WENT ON A COUPLE RECON PATROLS WITH THE VIET-NAM...

BAD PLACE HERE... GO FAST/

STEP ON IT, BAXTER?

KEEP GOIN'... THEIR GRENADES M SSED/

KERBLAM

I DIDN'T LIKE ANY OF IT/ ONE OF OUR GUYS, A GUY FROM CHICAGO, GOT NAILED RIGHT IN CAMP BY A COMMIE SNIPER...

I'M GOIN' HOME FIRST CHANCE I GET, FATHER DONOVAN/ THIS AIN'T FOR ME/ WE'RE NOT DOIN' ANY GOOD HERE/

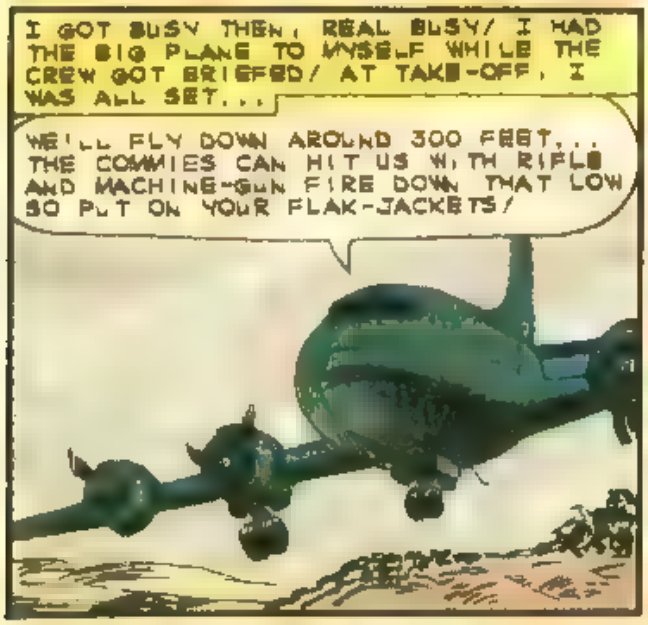
I THINK WE ARE, AL...A GREAT DEAL OF GOOD/ COMMUNISM IS A TERRIBLE CANCER OF THE HUMAN SOUL AND IT MUST BE STOPPED BY THOSE OF US WHO ARE NOT INFECTED/ YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THAT SOME DAY AND KNOW THAT ANY SACRIFICE WE MAKE HERE IS JUSTIFIED/

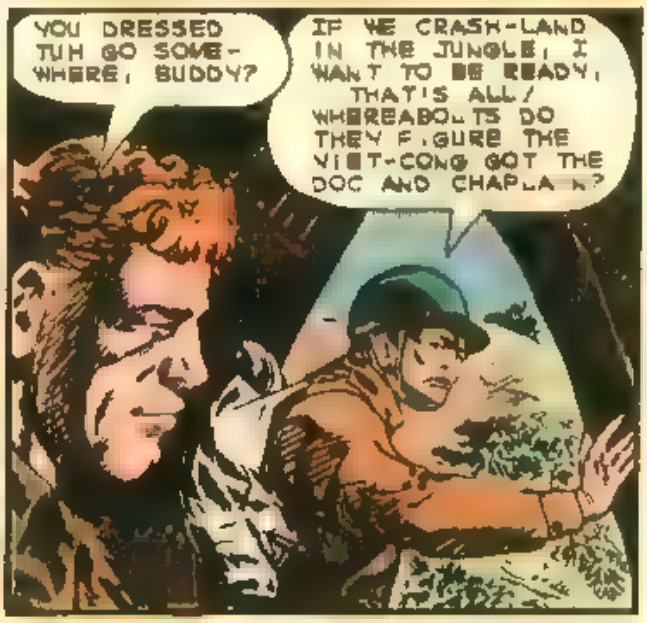
I THOUGHT IT WAS BAD...BUT IT GOT REAL BAD ABOUT A WEEK LATER/ DR. WEINSTEIN AND THE CHAPLAIN HAD TO LEAVE FOR THE INTERIOR, AN EPIDEMIC HAD BROKEN OUT IN A SMALL VILLAGE/

I'LL COLLECT YOUR MAIL FOR YOU AND KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS, SIR/

THEY SHOULDN'T GO INTO THE INTERIOR/ THE VIET-CONG ARE SUPPOSEDLY NOWHERE NEAR THE VILLAGE BUT I'M NOT SO SURE/
AWW, NOBODY'S GOING TO PICK ON A DOCTOR AND A PRIEST, NOT EVEN THE COMMIES/

TWO DAYS LATER, WE GOT THE WORD/ THE VIET-CONG HAD RAIDED THE VILLAGE WHERE DR. WEINSTEIN AND FATHER DONOVAN HAD GONE...
LET ME RIDE WITH YOU, SIR/ THE DOCTOR AND THE CHAPLAIN ARE...
ALL RIGHT, BAXTER/ AN EXTRA PAIR OF EYES SEARCHING THE JUNGLE FROM THE AIR WON'T HURT/


I GOT BUSY THEN, REAL BUSY/ I HAD THE BIG PLANE TO MYSELF WHILE THE CREW GOT BRIEFED/ AT TAKE-OFF, I WAS ALL SET...
WE'LL FLY DOWN AROUND 300 FEET... THE COMMIES CAN HIT US WITH RIFLE AND MACHINE-GUN FIRE DOWN THAT LOW SO PUT ON YOUR FLAK-JACKETS/


YOU DRESSED TUH GO SOMEWHERE, BUDDY?
IF WE CRASH-LAND IN THE JUNGLE, I WANT TO BE READY, THAT'S ALL/ WHEREABOUTS DO THEY FIGURE THE VIET-CONG GOT THE DOC AND CHAPLAIN?

BLAM BLAM
RIGHT DOWN THERE'D BE AS GOOD A GUESS AS ANY/ WE'D BETTER TURN BACK, 'TILL BE DARK IN ANOTHER HOUR/
BLAM
TAK TAK

I HAD A SPLIT SECOND TO MAKE UP MY MIND...AT 250MPH, WE'D BE A LONG WAY OFF IN NO TIME/
TELL THE PILOT I THINK I SAW SOMETHIN'...TELL 'EM TO CIRCLE THAT SPOT AGAIN/
THIS PARATROOPER SAYS HE SAW SOMETHING, SKIPPER/
I WENT OUT THE MINUTE WE PASSED OVER THAT CLEARING/ I KNEW I'D BE SPOTTED BUT I HAD TO BE CLOSE ENOUGH TO THEM TO KEEP FROM BEING LOST/
BUDDA BUDDA
KRAK KRAK KRAK
I'M NOT AS HELP-LESS AS I LOOK, COMMIES/
BLAM

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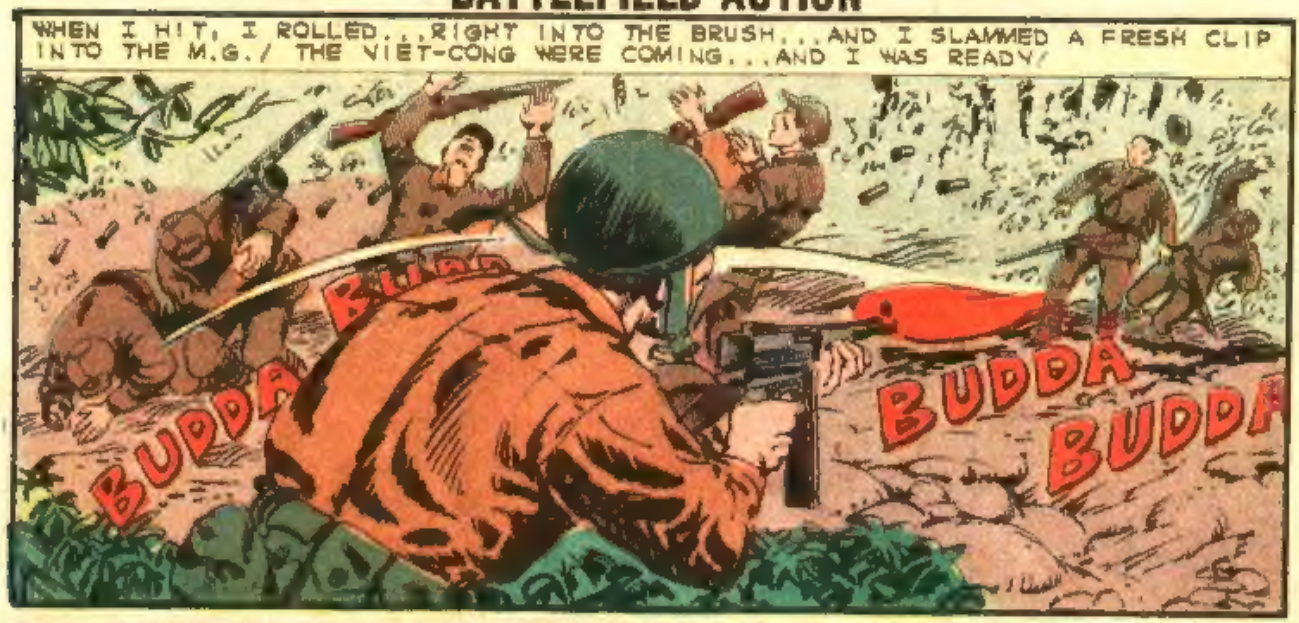
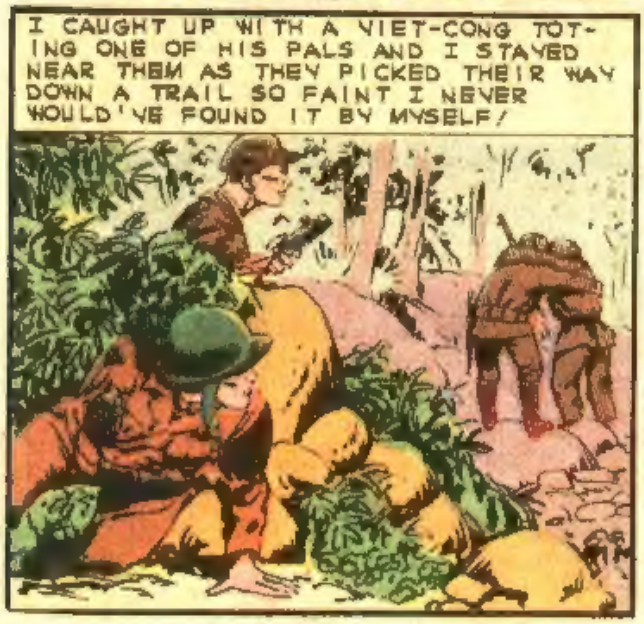

WHEN I HIT, I ROLLED...RIGHT INTO THE BRUSH...AND I SLAMMED A FRESH CLIP INTO THE M.G./ THE VIET-CONG WERE COMING...AND I WAS READY/
BUDDA BUDDA
BUDDA BUDDA

THEY BEAT IT...CARRYIN' THEIR WOUNDED/ NOW, I'VE GOT TO HUNT A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK, FIND DR. WEINSTEIN AND FATHER DONOVAN/

WOUNDED/ THAT'S RIGHT...FIVE OR SIX OF THEM ARE HURT PRETTY BAD... THEY'LL NEED A DOCTOR...AND WEINSTEIN'S SOMEWHERE AROUND/


I CAUGHT UP WITH A VIET-CONG TOTING ONE OF HIS PALS AND I STAYED NEAR THEM AS THEY PICKED THEIR WAY DOWN A TRAIL SO FAINT I NEVER WOULD'VE FOUND IT BY MYSELF/

I WAS LUCKY/ I HIT THE JACK-POT RIGHT OFF/
THERE'S THE DOC AND THE PADRE/ NOW, HOW DO I GET 'EM SPRUNG/

IT GOT DARK SO QUICKLY I WAS CAUGHT BY SURPRISE/ BUT I SAW WHERE DR. WEINSTEIN AND FATHER DONOVAN WERE TIED BACK TO BACK, THEIR HANDS AND FEET BOUND TOGETHER SO THAT THEY WERE HELPLESS/ AND WHEN IT WAS DARK, I MOVED...

WHO'S THAT?

IT'S ME, SIR, AL BAXTER/

I CUT THEM LOOSE BUT THEY DIDN'T STIR/ THEY KNEW THE VIET-CONG WERE ALL AROUND...SO I MADE MY LITTLE PLAN/

I LET GO FIVE GRENADES REAL FAST...THEN THE PRIEST AND DOCTOR TOOK OFF AHEAD OF ME HEADING SOUTH LIKE A COUPLE OF TRACK STARS/

KERBLAM

BAM

BAM

COME ON, BAXTER/

THE VIET-NAM'S SOMEWHERE NEAR, BAXTER/ I OVERHEARD THE VIET-CONG SAY THAT A RESCUE PARTY WAS NEARBY/ WE'LL HEAD SOUTH AND HOPE WE FIND A FRIENDLY VILLAGE OR TROOPS/

WE MADE IT BACK OKAY/ AND I DIDN'T GET CHEWED OUT FOR WHAT I'D DONE/

TOO BAD YOU HATE THE OUTFIT, AL/ THE C.O. TELLS ME YOU'LL MAKE A GOOD N.C.O. ONE OF THESE DAYS/

MAYBE I WILL, SARGE/ Y'KNOW, I MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE A CAREER MAN AFTER ALL/

END

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IT SOUNDS
IT SMOKES

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